

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

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FOLLOWING REPEAT ATHENS 5970 SENT ACTION SECSTATE AUG 22ND.

QUOTE:

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR GR US

SUBJ: PROPOSED TASCA INTERVIEW FOR NEWSWEEK

FOR EUR/HARTMAN FROM AMBASSADOR

FOLLOWING PROPOSED TEXT OF TASCA INTERVIEW WITH

NEWSWEEK EDITOR DE BORCHGRAVE:

QUESTION: EVERY GREEK I'VE TALKED TO SEEMS TO BE CONVINCED  
THAT NOT ONLY DID THE U.S. KNOW ABOUT THE COUP THAT DEPOSED  
MAKARIOS, BUT THAT WE ENCOURAGED IT.

ANSWER: THAT'S COMPLETE BALONEY.

Q.: SO, WHAT'S THE REAL STORY?

A.: IT WAS OBVIOUS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS THAT THERE HAD BEEN

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GROWING FRICTION AND TENSION BETWEEN MAKARIOS AND IOANNIDES -

WHICH PEAKED WITH MAKARIOS' LETTER DEMANDING THE REMOVAL OF 650 GREEK OFFICERS FROM THE ISLAND BY JULY 20. WE BECAME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE ON CYPRUS. WE HAD NO PRECISE INFORMATION ON ANY COUP, BUT WE DID MAKE CRYSTAL CLEAR TO ALL ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT THAT WE WERE OPPOSED TO ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE, INCLUDING COUPS. IF I HAD KNOWN THAT SOMETHING WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ON MY BOAT. THE MINUTE I HEARD THE NEWS I ASKED THE NAVY TO SEND A CHOPPER TO PICK ME UP.

Q.: A LOT OF PEOPLE SEEM TO BELIEVE THE CIA CONTROLLED IOANNIDES.

A.: JUST FOR ARGUMENT'S SAKE, LET'S LOOK AT THAT LOGICALLY. WE HAD NO SERIOUS PROBLEM ON HOMEPORTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SIXTH FLEET UNTIL IOANNIDES OVERTHREW PAPADOPOULOS. SO WHAT KIND OF CONTROL IS THAT? IF THE U.S. HAD THE CAPABILITY TO PICK A GREEK LEADER -- WHICH IT MOST CERTAINLY DOES NOT -- DO YOU REALLY THINK WE WOULD HAVE BEEN MAD ENOUGH TO PICK IOANNIDES? LET'S BE SERIOUS.

Q.: WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER MAKARIOS WAS DEPOSED AND NIKOS SAMPSON PUT IN AS PRESIDENT?

A.: IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT EVEN IOANNIDES WAS DISASSOCIATING HIMSELF FROM THE DECISION TO PUT IN SAMPSON. HE WAS EMBARRASSED BY THE MOVE.

Q.: THEN WHO MADE THE DECISION?

A.: THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THIS WAS A LOCAL DECISION IN CYPRUS AFTER SEVERAL OTHER CANDIDATES EITHER DECLINED OR COULD NOT BE FOUND.

Q.: DID WE EXPRESS OUR DISAPPROVAL TO IOANNIDES?

A.: YES, IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS.

Q.: YOU PERSONALLY?  
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A.: I DID NOT DEAL WITH IOANNIDES. HE WAS, AFTER ALL, THE CHIEF OF MILITARY POLICE IN GREECE, AND IT WAS NOT THE AMBASSADOR'S ROLE TO MAKE DIPLOMATIC DEMARCHES TO A COP, BUT HE GOT THE MESSAGE.

Q.: MANY GREEKS BELIEVE THAT THE CIA WAS DEALING BEHIND YOUR BACK AND YOU WERE NOT AWARE OF EVERYTHING THAT WAS

BEING SAID TO THE GREEK MILITARY.

A.: ANYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT SIMPLY DOES NOT UNDERSTAND HOW OUR GOVERNMENT WORKS.

Q.: WHAT DID YOU REPORT TO WASHINGTON ABOUT SAMPSON?

A.: THAT HE WAS A GUERRILLA AND A GANGSTER AND THE GRAVE IMPLICATIONS OF HIS TAKEOVER. I FELT THIS COULD BE THE MATCH THAT MIGHT SET FIRE TO A LONG-SMOLDERING GREEK-TURKISH CRISIS, NOT ONLY IN CYPRUS BUT OVER OIL RIGHTS IN THE AEGEAN. THEN WE HAD THE SISCO MISSION.

Q.: WHEN THAT FAILED AND THE TURKS INVADED CYPRUS, IS IT TRUE IOANNIDES AND HIS PEOPLE HAD TAKEN THE DECISION TO GO TO WAR AGAINST TURKEY?

A.: YES, AND TO GET OUT OF NATO IF WE TRIED TO STOP IT. SUCH A WAR WOULD HAVE BEEN AN APPALLING TRAGEDY FOR ALL CONCERNED. IT WOULD POSE THE GRAVEST THREAT TO WORLD PEACE IN A LONG, LONG, TIME.

Q.: WERE YOU INSTRUCTED TO GET IOANNIDES TO REVERSE THIS DECISION?

A.: HISTORY WILL RECORD WHAT HAPPENED. WAR WAS AVERTED, BUT IT WAS NOT EASY. YOU CANNOT IMAGINE HOW UNINFORMED AND INCOMPETENT IOANNIDES AND HIS CIVILIAN MINISTERS WERE.

Q.: SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE SUGGESTED WASHINGTON WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT ANOTHER CUBA IN CYPRUS UNDER MAKARIOS.

A.: I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANY REFERENCE WHATSOEVER IN ANY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMUNICATION WITH WASHINGTON ABOUT THIS ALLEGED CONCERN. NOR HAVE I EVER HEARD THIS FEAR MENTIONED IN MY CONVERSATIONS IN WASHINGTON, IT IS YET ANOTHER CANARD.

Q.: YOU HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF SUPPORTING THE COLONELS FOR THE LAST FOUR AND A HALF YEARS. DID YOU?

A.: I DEFY ANYONE TO PRODUCE ONE WORD OR ONE PICTURE THAT SUPPORTS THIS THEORY. IT IS DEMONSTRABLY FALSE. WHEN I SAW CARAMANLIS AS FAR BACK AS OCTOBER 1971 AND IN MY TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE, I SAID EVEN THEN THAT I THOUGHT THE MAN WHO IS NOW THE PRIME MINISTER ONCE AGAIN COULD COME BACK AND PLAY A USEFUL ROLE. THE REGIME PRESS ATTACKED ME FOR THIS AND SAID I WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO IRAN. IF PAPADOPOULOS HAD STAYED ON, I AM SURE HE WOULD

HAVE ASKED FOR A NEW AMBASSADOR. I AND MEMBERS OF MY MISSION WERE MAKING CONSTANT DEMARCHES TO HIM ABOUT THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY. I ALSO MADE COUNTLESS PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT WERE CARRIED CRITICALLY IN THE LOCAL PRESS BUT IGNORED BY THE FOREIGN PRESS.

Q.: SUCH AS?

A.: SUCH AS WHEN I WOULD OPEN AN ART EXHIBIT I WOULD MAKE A SPEECH STRESSING THE NEED FOR A RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS. I WAS THE FIRST AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO SPEAK GREEK IN A LONG TIME AND I MADE THIS POINT TO ANYONE WHO WOULD LISTEN. OF COURSE IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT WE REALIZED THAT THE DECISION ON HOW TO ORGANIZE GREECE'S INTERNAL POLITICAL LIFE WAS ONE FOR THE GREEKS THEMSELVES TO MAKE. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THE U.S. AMBASSADOR CANNOT HAVE AN OPINION ON SUCH MATTERS. AND BACK TO REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT WAS THE THEME IN ALL MY CONVERSATIONS WITH GREEK OFFICIALS. THIS WAS DONE, OF COURSE, IN LINE WITH OUR POLICY WHICH WAS TO SUPPORT THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE NATO ALLIANCE WHILE ENCOURAGING A RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN GREECE. I AM THE FIRST TO ADMIT THAT IT WAS NOT AN EASY POLICY TO CARRY OUT. BUT THERE IS GOOD EVIDENCE THAT IT WAS DONE AS SUCCESSFULLY AS WAS POSSIBLE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES. I AM ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS WITH ALL THE PEOPLE NOW IN POWER. SO MUCH FOR THE CANARD THAT I HAD NO CONTACT WITH THE OPPOSITION.

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THESE CONTACTS WERE CONTINUOUS.

Q.: HOW, THEN, DO YOU EXPLAIN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST YOU?

A.: FRANKLY, I THINK ANY AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WOULD HAVE RUN INTO TROUBLE. IT WAS MY JOB TO CARRY OUT WHAT WAS ESSENTIALLY AN UNPOPULAR POLICY, --EVEN THOUGH FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT POINT OF VIEW, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE ANY BETTER ALTERNATIVE, AT THE TIME. MANY WERE HONESTLY UNHAPPY ABOUT THAT POLICY AND LET IT OUT ON ME PERSONALLY BECAUSE I HAPPENED TO BE THE VISIBLE SYMBOL. I DON'T HOLD THAT AGAINST THEM REALLY, BECAUSE I HAVE FULL UNDERSTANDING FOR THEIR FEELINGS. BUT THERE WERE ALSO OTHERS, MUCH LESS HONORABLY MOTIVATED, WHO LOBBIED AGAINST ME IN WASHINGTON AND MANAGED TO PERSUADE PROMINENT CONGRESSMEN AND JOURNALISTS THAT TASCA HAD BEEN TAKEN INTO CAMP BY THE COLONELS. THE, RECORD DISPROVES THAT BEYOND THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT.

COMMENT:

ABOVE TEXT WAS WORKED OUT WITH SENIOR NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENT ON UNDERSTANDING IT WILL BE PUBLISHED ONLY AFTER CLEARANCE.

I BELIEVE ITS PUBLICATION WILL SERVE TO CORRECT CERTAIN  
MISAPPREHENSIONS REGARDING U.S. POLICY TOWARDS GREECE.  
IF DEPARTMENT HAS NO OBJECTION I SHALL AUTHORIZE FILING  
OF TEXT TO NEWSWEEK COB AUGUST 22.

TASCA

UNQUOTE

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